

**July 31, 2008 Minutes of
Bigfork Land Use Advisory Committee**

Committee members present: Darrel Coverdell, John Bourquin, Shelley Gonzales, Gary Ridderhoff, Paul Guerrant, Charles Gough, Al Johnson, and 11 members of the public.

Chairman Gonzales called the meeting to order at 4: 10 pm.

The Agenda was adopted as emailed (m/sc Gough/Coverdell).

The minutes for June 26, 2008 were approved as mailed (m/sc Bourquin/Johnson)

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:

A. Sign-in Sheet: Reminder to the public of the availability of BLUAC minutes through email and BSC website bigforksteering.org/.

B. Application status: The Flathead County Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the application.

C. Copies of the Ridgeview Park application were forwarded to BLUAC members with the final approval of the Flathead County Commissioners noting changes to two conditions (6 & 20).

APPLICATIONS:

None

Informal Project Review:

A. Peter Leander sent Chairman Gonzales an email regarding a proposed development between Bigfork Stage Road and Swan Hill Road. Leander provided copies of a map showing the parcels in question. There is a 3.7 acre parcel zoned R-1, a 28.9 acre parcel zoned SAG-5 and 79.5 acre parcel zoned SAG-10 contiguous 80 acre parcel which is controlled by a conservation easement. The owners intend to develop a sustainable “green” project with density appropriate to the surroundings. Leander indicates he has been in touch with residents of Swan Hill Drive and Bigfork Stage Road.

Johnson: In what form does he want feedback?

Gonzales: They would like to know what we want to see and what we do not want to see.

Johnson: My concern is that the feedback should not be binding. They are asking for pre-judgment before an application reaches BLUAC. I would suggest they consult the Bigfork Neighborhood Plan in order to determine if their plans are compatible with it.

Coverdell: I agree, they need to review the Neighborhood Plan.

Bourquin: We would need a lot more information before we could comment.

Gough, Guerrant, Ridderhoff: Agree with previous comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

John Righetti: Peter has been in contact with the Swan Hill Homeowners Association and informed us they have cut back on the original plans for development. Leander assured us the property would remain SAG-10. Ingress and egress is still to be considered. Leander stated a locked fire gate would be appropriate. There may be one more 10-acre parcel involved that is not shown on the map. Without that parcel, the property would not connect to Swan Hill Drive.

Julie Spencer: The property has not been annexed into the Bigfork Water & Sewer District.

Johnson: Is there anything on the undesignated parcel?

Righetti: A logging road that would not conform to fire standards.

B. Lieberman: Louise Tidwell stated the project for the old bowling alley property is still in the conceptual stages. She introduced Narda Wilson who is the land planner working on the project and John Thomas with A to Z Engineering.

Wilson: Described the property and stated the client had acquired two parcels, both zoned R-3, to the west of the original property. The project will be mixed use with the goal to create an integrated live/work space that is pedestrian oriented. They hope to qualify for the LEEDS program, which would include the demolition of the old building and disposal of materials. The original property is zoned B-3. The three parcels are approximately 1.75 acres. They will apply to the Flathead County Planning & Zoning Department to change zoning on the R-3 properties to B-3. The intention is to relocate the access further west through the newly acquired property and cannot achieve the relocation without a zone change for those two parcels. The Bigfork Land Use Map designates the area Urban Residential and they believe the plans for the property follows the goals and policies by expanding commercial in existing areas.

Thomas: They are hopeful to certify as a LEEDS project, which is difficult since LEEDS is geared to more urban applications. If certified, it will be the first in Montana. Current access to the property is a problem and the property to the west is better suited by topography and distance from Hwy 35 intersection. Stormwater is an issue with the current impervious surfaces. The plan is to install catch basins, etc. to contain stormwater on the property.

Lieberman: (Displayed a concept drawing) I developed Sunset Place and where I could have built 5 homes, I built 4 and left an area of green space. I want it to be a beautiful entry to Bigfork. Parking will be tucked behind trees buildings and the buildings will be less than the 35-foot height limit. We hope to get LEEDS certification and the property is within easy walking distance to the Bigfork Village. We have planned an open house to speak to all the neighbors and anyone interested in what we are proposing.

Gonzales: With all the businesses, I'm concerned about clusters of signs.

Lieberman: All signs will be smaller than regulations permit and be attractively designed.

Coverdell: Will there be a pedestrian walkway on Holt Drive?

Lieberman: Yes, plus we will provide bicycle stands.

Coverdell: How will foot and bike traffic get across Hwy 35?

Lieberman: The perfect solution would be a bridge or tunnel but that is very expensive and a bridge could be an eyesore entering Bigfork. Hopefully, there will be push button crossings installed at the intersection.

Gough: Are you far enough along to know how much will be commercial and residential?

Lieberman: There will be a total of 30,00 sq. ft with 20,000 in office space and 10,000 in residential.

Johnson: How large are the residential units?

Lieberman: About 750 sq. ft., but two units could be combined for a total of 1,500 sq.ft.

Ridderhoff: Have you contacted neighboring property owners?

Lieberman: Yes, and have answered questions such as “how long for construction to be completed?” and “Will there be noise like the Bowling Alley?” We are hosting an open house and have invited all of the neighbors.

Bourquin: If you plan to build on those 45% slopes, you may have some difficulty with that. If BLUAC were able to look at the big picture of this project, it would be easier to consider a zone change request.

Lieberman: We can give you a concept with the understanding that engineering, county regulations and topography determine the final outcome. We have met with Bigfork Water and Sewer to determine the best way to bring in the services. Unless there is a good reason to change, we won’t change.

Thomas: The process is ongoing.

Wilson: We will have more precise information in the near future.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Compression Brake Signage: BSC Chairman, Craig Wagner, stated Daniel Bolan, MDT, has forwarded the request to the Flathead County Commissioners for approval, as reported last month. There has been no action by the Commissioners to date.

B. Meetings with County P & Z Chair, Vice-chair and Commissioner: Gonzales reported she had sent emails to all the involved parties and has not received a response. We’ll place this on next month’s agenda.

C. Scenic Corridor Status: Same as above.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Liquor License: The Wine Cellar Café & Gift Gallery: Hans and Linda Paul have applied for a liquor license to serve wine at 435 Bridge Street. The application is for alcohol only, no gambling.

B. Member At Large Appointment: Al Johnson reported that Gary Hall and Dale Lauman were reluctant to approve his appoint because they believed it should be an elected position. Johnson said the concern had to do with the BLUAC By Laws stating on Page 1 that BLUAC consists of 7 elected members. Page 3 spells out the process but

it appears confusing. Guerrant moved BLUAC amend the By Laws, at the next meeting, to take out one word on Page 1. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. A letter with the proposed change to the By Laws will be forwarded to the Commissioners stating this clarifies the process.

C. Septic Tank Waste: Pat Dake addressed BLUAC on the application of a proposed site on Lee Road, 77 acres owned by Angus Lee, for dumping septic tank waste. She objects to this and asked if BLUAC can help. Gonzales explained that she had called the County Health Dept. and was told that applications were forwarded to Montana State authorities for licensing. If the State determines the site meets the requirements and is suitable they will issue a license. The site has to be tilled within five hours or covered with lime if the ground is frozen.

D. Fisher Law Firm: Bourquin presented a letter from the law firm relating to the Touris litigation. The letter will be forwarded to Chief Deputy County Attorney, Jonathan Smith.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Julie Spencer: Reported the Bigfork Sewer Plant experienced a rough beginning of July with 2 ½ inches of rain. The plant experienced an overflow recording an over capacity volume of 532,000. They were able to pump into an onsite storage tank ~~tanker~~ to limit the overflow. The crews were working 24-7 for three days. The manhole covers were just sucking rainwater into the sewer lines.

Guerrant: Can you replace the manhole covers to limit stormwater infusion?

Spencer: We haven't found a very efficient method to remedy the problem. There are some sealants, but then the covers are very difficult to remove when we need to do maintenance.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Sue Hanson
BLUAC Secretary

